

## I. INTRODUCTION

This position is located in a field location of the Processed Products Branch of the Fruit and Vegetable Programs. The Branch is responsible for carrying out the permissive inspection and grading programs for processed fruits, vegetables, and other miscellaneous commodities.

The incumbent serves as an Agricultural Marketing Specialist responsible for performing a variety of marketing assignments concerning primarily the inspection and grading of processed fruits and vegetables.

## II. DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Applies instructional material, the official grading standards, and related regulations governing the processing, storage, packaging, and transportation of processed fruits, vegetables, and related commodities.

Selects representative samples from product lines or completed lots according to approved sample plans and procedures.

Inspects the product to determine its U.S. grade by evaluating such factors as quality, condition, and/or compliance to other stated contract specifications. Issues required certification documents for products inspected.

Performs condition of container inspection to determine kind and extent of defects in processed food items. Performs condition of product inspection at destination.

Inspects processing plants for sanitation to determine compliance with Department rules and FDA regulations. Reports instances of noncompliance to plant management and higher-level Branch officials.

Observes characteristics of the raw product. Advises plant management of findings and the feasibility of proposed changes to improve quality stability of the processed product and sanitation.

Performs a limited number of analytical determinations by prescribed methods and techniques under the direction of a Grader at a higher grade level.

### III. JOB CONTROLS

1. Responsibility for the Work of Others: None

2. Supervision and Guidance Received: The supervisor makes the assignments and coordinates the work; these duties may be delegated to a Grader-In-Charge of a processing plant. The employee in most instances independently performs the procedures required by the assignment, resolves most technical problems, and makes binding grade determinations. The employee issues certificates and reports explaining and supporting grading determinations. When a new commodity is assigned, the incumbent consults with higher graded employees if guidance is needed. Certificates and technical proficiency are frequently reviewed.

Assignments involve making some final grade and condition determinations, and issuing certificates. Such determinations affect the product's price and/or acceptability in relation to contract specifications. Both factors affect the financial interests of buyers and sellers.

Guides consist of official grade standards, regulations pertaining to sanitation and processing, manuals for grading and conducting inspections, and supplemental written and oral instructions for borderline and unusual situations. The employee uses discretion in selecting and applying the appropriate guides to a variety of situations and independently explains or advises industry management on USDA requirements or policies as they apply in unusual situations. Analyzes processing methods and, with the advice of the supervisor or inspector of higher grade, advises plant management of their effect on product quality when guidelines are not apparent.

Contacts may include the employees of processing plants and related industry firms, as well as Agricultural Commodity Graders and employees of other government agencies. The purpose of the contacts is to develop and maintain the cooperation of plant management and industry employees and resolve conflicts; to explain grade determinations and related agency policies and regulations, and to advise on or exchange information related to technical matters.